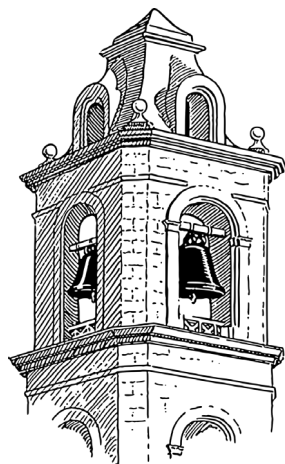


# *Penge Congregational Church*



*November 2024*



# **The Minister writes... well, it's Chris Parker this time with ...**

**His thoughts on the passing  
seasons...**

**I**t has come to that time of year when our surroundings turn from green to those oranges, yellows and rustic browns. I love this time of year as the trees change and give us a few weeks of a colourful display before going to sleep for winter.



The chill in the air and when the sun is out the sharpness of landscapes, which are great for the camera.

My allotment has produced some good fruit this year with an abundant crop of greengages and plums. I did reasonably well for rhubarb, and it was a good year for tomatoes.

Carrie and I were very busy in the kitchen making jams and tomato chutney. We had so many that we ran out of jars.

As I write I have spent the morning on the allotment as the weather forecaster stated it would be sunny with maybe a light shower. Fortunately for me she was correct. The plot is starting to look somewhat sad as

everything finishes producing crops and the plants die off.

Or do they die off?

I planted leeks this year which didn't do very well, most bolted, which is basically when they get stressed and shoot up a long stem before they are fully grown. It may have been due to lack of water during that dry spell in the summer. I was on holiday at the time and left my plot to be tended to by, ok... I won't name and shame but perhaps the leeks didn't get the water required.

Now there's a thing, perhaps when we feel stressed, we should have a drink of water. If it works for plants maybe humans!

*I digress.* Getting back to the dead looking leek. As I lifted the plant with a fork, I noticed around the base a green shoot coming out of a bulb. Most of my remaining leeks all had this formation. I carefully prized them off the main plant and put to one side.

This was new life forming from the parent plant. I've replanted about a dozen of these new plants to see how they get on. I normally grow leeks from seed.

**W**hen we become Christians very often someone more mature in their faith has sown the seed which has generated an inquisitiveness sufficient for us to enquire and make searching questions until **we ask Jesus into our lives**. We feed off those who are already on their Christian

journey. Like the shoot we grow by feeding off the main plant and gradually mature.

This is one of the reasons why we come together at church, to be among other Christians and learn from Bible teaching and people's experiences and testimony. We do however have a far better main plant to lean on than our Christian friends, this being the **Holy Spirit**.

**The Spirit helps us with wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge and fear of the Lord.**

If we grow in these then the fruit produced in us will show in our love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control.

(Galatians 5: 22-23).

Enjoy these last few days before winter sets in and take a moment to marvel at the change of God's creation.

His creation never goes to sleep and like the squirrels that were busy today collecting acorns for the winter storage we too, as disciples, are to keep busy in God's work, leading others to ask Jesus into their lives.

Oh, and just a reminder Christmas is just around the corner.

Chris P



# Hi from Durham



**H**ey everyone, it's Siobhan. Missing you all up here in the cold North.

I thought I'd share an update on what I'm up to.

The PhD is going well. I am writing and reading a lot about other people who write and read a lot in multiple languages and multiple places. Moving from one place to another is both hard and inspiring for writers and I am slowly finding out how different people express that.

I'm also now president of a student society, **Inclusive Christian Movement Durham**. We are working to create an inclusive, welcoming, and affirming home for Christians in Durham, especially those who don't get such a positive welcome in other Christian groups, such as LGBTQ+ Christians. It's challenging – we're a very small society at the moment. But things are looking positive.

At **Fresher's Fair**, where new students come each year to find out about new societies they could join, we handed out over 40 flyers and even had some non-Christian students come up and say they were really glad we were there.

Coming up, we have a **welcome lunch hosted by Durham City Methodists, a prayerful walk around Durham, a talk about supporting refugees, exciting events with other faith groups for interfaith week, and a Trans Day of Remembrance Service**. It would be so great if you can pray for us – that we can grow and that LGBTQ+ Christians in Durham would feel welcomed, affirmed and loved.

If you want to find out more about LGBTQ+ affirming theology, here are some links and books that some of our members have found useful:

### **Film**

'1946: the mistranslation that shifted culture' is a documentary about the first time 'homosexual' appeared in English Bible translations – it's more recent than you might think.

1946 | The Mistranslation that Shifted a Culture (1946 themovie.com)

### **Websites**

<https://www.qchristian.org/resources/theology>

<https://www.thechristiancloset.com/blog/2021/8/11/yu9ynm7rkiwsy9ay1gqirviflli6d5>

## Books

Matthew Vines, *God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-Sex Relationships*

Kathy Baldock, *Walking the Bridgeless Canyon: Repairing the Breach Between the Church and the LGBT Community*

***Christina Beardsley and Michael O'Brien (eds), This is My Body: Hearing the Theology of Transgender Christians***





## SIMPLE STEPS TO STAYING ORGANISED

If you take it out, put it back.  
 If you open it, close it.  
 If you say it, do it.  
 If you dirty it, clean it up.  
 If you don't use it, give it away.  
 If it doesn't fit, don't wear it.  
 If it has expired, bury it.  
 If it's junk, get rid of it.  
 If it's a bill, pay it.  
 If it's important, schedule it.

There are two basic motivating forces: fear and love. When we are afraid, we pull back from life. When we are in love, we open to all that life has to offer with passion, excitement, and acceptance. We need to learn to love ourselves first, in all our glory and our imperfections. If we cannot love ourselves, we cannot fully open to our ability to love others or our potential to create. Evolution and all hopes for a better world rest in the fearlessness and open-hearted vision of people who embrace life.

John Lennon

When we least expect it, life sets us a challenge to test our courage and willingness to change; at such a moment, there is no point in pretending that nothing has happened or in saying that we are not yet ready. The challenge will not wait. Life does not look back. A week is more than enough time for us to decide whether or not to accept our destiny.

Paulo Coelho

May your choices reflect  
 your hopes, not your fears.

Nelson Mandela

Darkness cannot drive  
 out darkness: only  
 light can do that.  
 Hate cannot drive  
 out hate: only  
 love can do  
 that.

Martin Luther  
 King Jr



Thanks to **Jean Bowden** for her creative page of sayings - the last of three - written from her home in Norfolk.

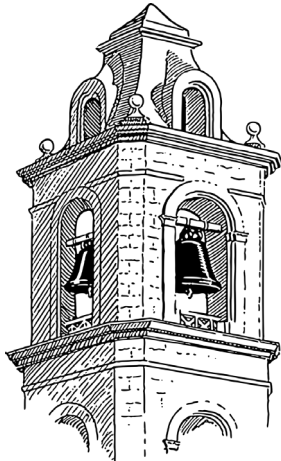
# Christmas Services

**Sunday 8th December 6:30pm**

**Carols by candlelight - including Penge Chamber Choir and Alan Langridge (organ)**

**Tuesday 24th December 11:30pm Midnight Communion by candlelight**

**Wednesday 25th December Family Service at 10am**



## MEMORIES ON A PLATE!

**H**ospitality and home-baking is surely something common to all CTiB and, way back in 1999, I edited a book of recipes from the congregation of St. George's. In the Intro I wrote that, despite the lure of a pristine new cook book, the recipes that mean most to us are those handed down and hoarded in original form because they are written in a dear, familiar hand or may evoke precious memories of people and occasions that are special to us.



“They melt in the mouth” declared my friend who enjoyed the few biscuits like these in the photo which I took her recently when she was recovering from surgery. The story of these biscuits goes back nearly 50 years when I was in Stone Park Maternity Home with my second son and a dear colleague from Woman’s Weekly visited me, bearing a half empty tin of her homemade Hungarian Chocolate Biscuits. “I dropped it at the bus stop in Brixton” she confessed “and I didn’t dare scoop them up off the pavement for you”! Later, enjoying the remnants so much, I regretted her attention to Health and Safety, knowing the antibiotics I was on would probably have kept me safe!

So popular did that recipe become, passed on to her from a staff artist on the magazine, and quickly begged by me when I was back home, that it featured regularly as the NCT support group coffee mornings were held at members' homes. One of my go-to baking choices as it was so simple and reliable.

Five years ago I visited one of those friends now living in Penzance as we celebrated our significant birthdays and not only had she baked some for old times' sake but also showed me the recipe appeared as her grandson's contribution to a fundraising calendar of recipes for his school!

More recently I met another NCT friend from the 70s as we delightedly recognised each other at the bus stop. During a hurried chat, catching up on the 194, she said her daughter had recently asked her for the recipe for those biscuits! So heartwarming somehow and I felt compelled to dig out my old typewritten, faded, stained copy to make some to take to my very closest NCT friend who today complimented them as above!

I love the idea that such a simple recipe has been shared with friends, handed down, not just to our own grown-up children but also to the next generation! Happy memories from a significant time in our lives.

*Jenny Froude*

If this has whetted your appetite, perhaps you might like the recipe which follows.

## HUNGARIAN CHOCOLATE BISCUITS

4 oz margarine (or butter), 2 oz caster sugar, half teaspoon vanilla essence, 4 oz S.R flour, half an oz of cocoa powder.

Cream fat and sugar together with essence. Sieve flour and cocoa and add to fat and sugar. Roll into 20 balls the size of small walnuts and place on greased baking sheets, allowing room for spreading. Flatten with a fork dipped in cold water. Bake at Gas mark 4 for 12 minutes.

*Jenny Froude*





FEATURING SELFOLK AND PENGES  
CHAMBER CHOIR

# FOLK MUSIC



# CEILIDH

**FOLK MUSIC MEETS CLASSICAL:  
CONCERT FOLLOWED BY A  
LIVELY CEILIDH**

**16TH NOVEMBER 6:30PM**

HOLY TRINITY WITH ST JOHN'S PENGES,  
ST JOHN'S SITE, 2 ST JOHN'S RD,  
SE20 7EQ

TICKETS £10 ON DOOR  
CASH OR CARD  
ALL PROFITS GO TO  
CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY,  
PENGE DEBT CENTRE

christians  
against  
poverty

**CAP**

## Services in November

*The Services in November are all about the **small contributions** which make a big difference.*

**Sunday, 3rd November** The widow of Zerephath!

1 Kings 17:8-16

**Sunday, 10th November** Naaman's servant.

2 Kings 5

**Sunday, 17th November** The boy with the loaves and fishes

St John 6:1-14

**Sunday, 24th November** Cafe Church

Thank you, Jess, for the poster opposite -  
looks like a jolly event.

*Oh my! Oh my! Oh my! It's that time of year again!*

Yes, January is only three months' away and we have the perfect Family Pantomime to lift those post-Christmas blues:

### ***'PINOCCHIO & THE BLUE FAIRY'***

**G**et ready to cheer and jeer as little wooden Pinocchio - on his quest to become a real boy - is fooled by cunning Foxy and daft Gatto.

Will he be sold to the circus by the evil Child Catcher!? Or will the Black Queen turn him into firewood? Can **Jiminy Cricket** and the **Blue Fairy** save him? or will **Pinocchio's nose grow longer?! And will our pantomime Dame finish baking those pizzas before the end of the show? There's only one way to find out - Book Now and *Boo! Cheer! Laugh!* and enjoy our great **Live Band** as the characters sing and dance their way through this adventure full of fun and laughter.**

**\*\*\*REFRESHMENTS \*\*\* WINE & BEER \*\*\*  
CONFECTIONERY \*\*\* GLOW STICKS\*\*\***

***Hope to see you there!***

***Christine Foulds***

***St. Mark's Players***

***[www.sm-players.co.uk](http://www.sm-players.co.uk)***





St. Mark's Players' 2025 Family Pantomime



# PINOCCHIO

## AND THE BLUE FAIRY

FEATURING  
THE GLENLYN ACADEMY DANCERS



LIVE BAND



St George's Hall

Albemarle Rd, Beckenham BR3 5HZ

**Saturdays**

18th, 25th Jan & 1st Feb

at 2.30pm & 7.30pm

**Sundays**

19th, 26th Jan 2025

at 2.30pm

Adults £12. Children £9

**BOOK NOW!**

[WWW.SM-PLAYERS.CO.UK](http://WWW.SM-PLAYERS.CO.UK)

07422 516436

07973 408807



This year  
we are supporting

PARKINSON'S<sup>UK</sup>  
CHANGE ATTITUDES.  
FIND A CURE.

and

St Christopher's



# Harvest

**S**ome of the cans in these pictures are not filled with beans!

**T**hey are full of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. You might be able to spot a few cans of **Peace** and one of **Kindness**.

When we are full of the ***Holy Spirit*** what will be seen in the outside is the fruit of the Spirit!! Let the Spirit fill you up from the inside.

We had **Scouts** and leaders of the **Scouts, Cubs and Beavers** visiting us for **Harvest** and we had a fun time. Thanks to all for a big donation of dry food and cans for **Living Well**.





## Church meeting update

The next Church meeting will be in **January** - date to be provided soon!

**We had a Church meeting on 20th October  
which was very well attended.**

***These were the headlines***

## Church Hall and Memorial Room

Due to the large cracks these rooms are totally out of action now.

The nursery school (**Smiling Faces**) have moved into the Kenilworth Hall.

We have taken advice from an architect to think about how we could rebuild. We would initially need to get **planning permission** and take this in small steps.

We agreed unanimously to submit the initial plans to the **council** and then have a wider meeting with the architect about the possibilities.

Lots of details will need to be decided and various **options are around for funding this.**

**It will be a big project and aim to benefit the community and bring in an income for the church in the future.**



**We remember of course that the church is not the building but it is the people!**

## **Disabled access**

We had some funding for a **stair lift** from the church to the halls (the halls are on a level of about 4 steps up from the church).

But what we really need is access for **mobility vehicles** to go from the church to the halls. which is approximately 3 times the price. When we get some written quotes this can be discussed further.



## For Prayer

**P**lease pray for **Ewan** and those attending a conference in **South Africa** called

**The School Intersectional Eco-theology and Eco-Justice Witness** which is being run by **CWM (Council for World Mission)**.

This is in **November** and he can tell us all about it in the new year!

*(And his proud grandmother wishes to tell you that Ewan has graduated with a Master's degree in Occupational Therapy) (Ed.)*

**P**lease pray for **Rosemarie** who has been in hospital after a fall.

**P**lease pray for **carers both paid and unpaid**.



**Website:**

[www.pccweb.co.uk](http://www.pccweb.co.uk)



**To arrange a marriage service, funeral, baptism or similar event, please contact the Deacons:**

Lynn 07817 862 158

To book any other events (concerts etc.), please contact **Bernie Hall:**

[pcclettings@outlook.com](mailto:pcclettings@outlook.com)

Tel: 07999 296 686 (new number)

For enquiries related to this website please contact **Iona McShane** on:

[iona.mcshane@gmail.com](mailto:iona.mcshane@gmail.com)

To submit articles for the monthly newsletter:

[margaret@ecoharmony.org](mailto:margaret@ecoharmony.org)

**Deacons** at the moment are

**Jannett Ashley**

**Douglas Rathbone**

**Chris Parker**

**Lynn McShane** (treasurer)

[lynn.mcshane22@gmail.com](mailto:lynn.mcshane22@gmail.com)